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FOR STAS ANDREW REYNOLDS  
FOR IHA/WHA KATHERINE BLISS  
BRASILIA FOR ENV HUB JIMMY STORY

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [TBIO](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [AR](#)  
SUBJECT: HARVARD INITIATES STEM CELL RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP  
IN ARGENTINA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2580

¶1. (U) This telegram is sensitive but unclassified, and not for Internet distribution.

#### Summary

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¶2. (U) Harvard University and the GoA have begun an education and research and development initiative in Argentina that will initially focus on stem cell research. The program, called PABSELA, has won the vocal and financial support of the Minister of Education. The endeavor highlights the continuing opportunities for U.S. science and technology institutions to enhance the U.S.'s long-term intellectual security through collaborative efforts with Argentine partners. End Summary.

#### PABSELA Founded by Argentine Harvard Professors

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¶3. (U) The Program for the Advancement of Biomedical Science Education in Latin American (PABSELA) is a creation of the Harvard University Medical School's nonprofit international assistance organization Harvard Medical International (HMI). PABSELA was founded by two Harvard Medical School professors from Argentina, and its primary mission is to provide short (2-4 week) courses in biomedical topics that will be taught by Harvard Medical School professors to graduate students and researchers in Argentina. Harvard's vision is to formulate lasting bonds between Harvard and Latin American scientists, schools and research facilities, assuring Harvard's continued competitiveness in talent and research, while promoting advanced medical science in the developing world.

#### GoA and the Private Sector Footing the Bill

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¶4. (U) PABSELA is funded by a nonprofit called the "Crimson Foundation," created in Argentina specifically to assist PABSELA. The foundation's mission is to raise funds to pay for the travel of visiting professors, related administrative costs, and the purchase and donation of high-tech research equipment to participants. Harvard will continue to pay the salary and benefits of its professors who travel to Argentina to participate in the program. The foundation's local donors include Banco Rio, small and medium sized local pharmaceutical producers, Continental Airlines, and United Airlines. It has also received significant funding from the Ministry of Education. The Crimson Foundation's first year operating budget is in excess of USD 500,000.

The Minister's Blessing

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15. (U) Argentine Minister of Education Filmus has strongly embraced the idea, granting the Crimson Foundation USD 300,000 over the first three years of the program. The Ministry of Education indirectly funds and manages the majority of graduate and post-graduate education and research, making it one of the most important R&D policy players in the country.

#### An Early Focus on Stem Cells

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16. (U) Courses on a broad range of stem cell research topics are scheduled to begin in April 2007. Harvard has selected 30 stem cell researchers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela to attend hands-on training courses taught by Harvard at the quasi-governmental facility (similar to the NIH) Fundacion Instituto Leloir. The courses are free and the specific course matter is to be selected by the participants (not Harvard), based on their research interests. In some cases, PABSELA will also provide equipment to the participant's lab or facility. Harvard intends to select as students researchers willing to remain connected to Harvard in some capacity.

#### Comment

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17. (SBU) PABSELA Co-Director and former Harvard biologist Estanislao Bachrach told EmbOff that Minister of Education Filmus had expressed his frustration with the inefficiency of the Argentine education system and welcomed PABSELA as a way to keep Argentine researchers in Argentina

by working outside the existing bureaucracy. Bachrach also said he had received promises of significant future funding from major international pharmaceutical companies in Argentina, if Harvard is able to engender a local stem cell research community of "critical mass."

18. (SBU) Filmus's statements suggest a continued enthusiasm on the part of major Argentine S&T players to support innovative ways of developing and maintaining collaborative R&D environments. Filmus displayed a great deal of interest in Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State Dr. George Atkinson's proposed Global Science Partnerships program (reftel). Filmus's support for PABSELA indicates that similar collaborative initiatives (public or private) that could serve to enhance long-term U.S. intellectual security will likely find fertile ground in Argentina.  
MATERA